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Dr. Grant Swinger's Forecast for 1975

Following is the annual New Year Forecast by Dr. Grant Swinger, SGR consultant and director of the Center for the Absorption of Federal Funds. (Preliminary assessment of Dr. Swinger's 1974 Forecast indicates an accuracy of approximately 88 percent.)

January. Pressure mounts for disclosure of President Ford's I. Q., with Senator Kennedy charging "I. Q. gap." Mr. Ford, denouncing double-digit inflation, denies double-digit I. Q. Vice President Rockefeller, presiding at 10-day annual meeting of National Bicycle Path Anti-Litter Commission, in Youngstown, Ohio, says appointment of I.Q. Panel to his Critical Choices Commission is "purely coincidental."

February. Academy President says, "Science is in worst state of crisis in this century." New NIH director is fired. Government announces new energy plan, says gas tax increase under study but rationing is not. New study concludes marijuana is safe.

March. Mr. Ford, asked at a press conference to comment on FDA decision on Red No. 2, replies, "In this period of detente, there is no place for Cold War rhetoric. I would not expect Mr. Brezhnev to comment on Mr. Rockefeller, and I will not comment on Mr. Brezhnev's chief deputy." Secretary Kissinger admitted to Walter Reed Psychiatric Unit muttering in what one observer described as "infantile German." New study concludes marijuana is dangerous.

April. New NIH director is fired. Environmental impact suit prevents performance of 1812 Overture. Academy President says, "Science is in a Golden Age and has never been stronger." Government announces new energy plan, says gas rationing is under study, but tax increase is not.

May. Environmental Protection Agency reports New York City water supply provides the minimum daily requirement for all essential minerals, trace elements, and amino acids. Commenting on announcement of 10-percent unemployment rate, Mr. Ford says, "Looked at another way, it means a 90-percent *employment* rate." New study concludes marijuana is safe.

June. Former President Nixon voted Man of the Year by National Phlebitis Association; FBI names crime museum in his honor. New NIH director is fired. Academy President says, "Science is in crisis." National Transportation Safety Board cancels order for safety-defect recall of 950,000 year-old Chryslers after company reports none had yet been sold.

July. Government announces new energy plan, says gas rationing is not under study, but tax increase is. India successfully fires intercontinental missile, says it will be used for peaceful purposes only.

August. Senator Kennedy renews demand for presidential I. Q. disclosure. Mr. Ford, speaking at annual conference of Paroled Corporation Executives, says, "I am not a schnook." Government announces new energy plan, denies ever having considered gas tax increase or rationing.

September. Senator Minority Leader Scott, following White House briefing, says he has been shown evidence that "clearly vindicates the President of the I. Q. charge." New NIH director is fired. White House releases National Institute of Education study disputing relationship between intelligence and moving of lips while reading. Kennedy charges politics.

October. Soviets abruptly cancel plans for space linkup with NASA after US court agrees to hear demand by gay liberation group for participation in project. Academy President says, "Science is in so-so condition." New NIH director fired. Government announces new energy plan, says tax increase and rationing are under consideration.

November. Nobel Laureate William Shockley says he is considering radical revision of his theories on race and intelligence. New study concludes marijuana is dangerous.

December. Mr. Ford says 50-percent unemployment rate "presents an historic opportunity for a balanced economy." Vice President Rockefeller, presenting awards at Eastern Regional Cigar-Rolling competition, declines comment.

In Brief

President Ford's recent reorganization of the White House staff left the issue of scientific advice untouched. But following Rockefeller's confirmation as Vice President, Ford asked him to look into the question of presidential science advice, which is considered a hopeful sign by advocates of a return of science to the White House, since Rockefeller is a great believer in stationing expertise at the center of power.

With Washington turned off for the holiday season, Rockefeller won't get to the matter until later this month. One fear among old timers in the science advisory game is that he will turn for advice to the scientist to whom he has been closest, H-bomb enthusiast Edward Teller, who heretofore has been pretty much frozen out of the advisory network.

Edwards Ousts NIH Director, Then Quits Own Job at HEW . . .

It was presumably his administrative experience, but quite possibly his deftness with sharp instruments, that recently propelled HEW health chief Charles C. Edwards to the senior vice presidency of a surgical supply firm. But whatever the cause, the immaculately groom veteran of long government service performed his own mini-massacre prior to departure for the private sector. The result is that, once again, that suburban bastion of self-pity and paranoia, the National Institutes of Health, is awash with turmoil.

The motivations for Edwards' bizarre pre-holiday performance are all around ascribed to the wondrous catchall of "personality differences," and SGR cannot pretend to have penetrated very far beyond that. The bare facts are that less than a week prior to revealing his plans to leave the government, Edwards demanded and received the resignation of his handpicked choice for the directorship of NIH, Robert S. Stone, whom he had plucked from the obscurity of the deanship of the University of New Mexico medical school a mere 18 months previously. Stone, who agreed to go with neither bang nor whimper when he, in fact, could easily have raised a mighty row, is the second NIH director to get the boot in recent times, being the direct successor to Robert Q. Marston, who was sent packing after holding the job for only two years.

Since Edwards pushed Stone overboard just prior to bailing out himself, it may be inferred that a bit of score settling was involved, and that's all that may be involved here. But basic to all the turbulence between the elitist NIH and its elephantine parent, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, is the unsettled question of the relationship between ever-costlier biomedical research and the mounting responsibility of the federal government for financing health care throughout the nation. With the

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"Politicization" of NIH Charged in Firing of Stone

The Federation of American Scientists (FAS) responded to the firing of NIH Director Robert S. Stone with a hastily called press conference at which three Nobel laureates from NIH, plus three less illustrious colleagues, left the attending press a bit confused as to what they were bothered about.

The FAS, which has been branching out from its traditional concern with arms control and on to the fuzzier field of science-policy affairs, preceded the conference with a printed announcement titled, "FAS Deplores Politicization of NIH Research," accompanied by a statement signed by the participants, Nobelists Christian Anfinsen, Julius Axelrod, and Marshall Nierenberg, plus NIH laboratory chiefs Robert Goldberger, Franklin Neva, and Earl Stadtman.

The statement deplored Stone's firing "as one more indication of the degree to which NIH can be vulnerable to unwarranted and counter productive political control. A major instrument of that control," it continued, "is presidential appointment of the Director, a practice instituted as a provision of the National Cancer Act. We urge that this provision be repealed. The aura of career service and stability that the Directorship has traditionally carried is a vital component in the establishment and implementation of major programs in health research and health care."

The statement went on to urge that, pending a change in the appointment process, the President should move quickly to replace Stone, but only after consulting "leading professional societies."

In the question period that followed, the six were asked to provide examples of research that has been interfered with or gone undone as a result of political intrusions. No examples were offered, though one of the participants said he saw a menace of "Lysenkoism" if the present situation continues.

When asked for their views on what it was that had undone the ousted director, all agreed that they were too remote from administrative affairs at NIH to know about that. It was then explained that they were not defending Stone, of whom they said they knew very little; rather, they were protesting his ouster. One got the impression that the distinction was wasted as far as a major part of the audience was concerned.

FAS Director Jeremy Stone, no kin of the NIH Stone, closed the proceedings with a hard-core plea for the freedom of science. "We believe, at the Federation of American Scientists," he said, "that scientists engaged in basic research should not be told how to run their business."

It was also announced that "FAS will survey tens of thousands of biomedical scientists to obtain their views and advice regarding options for strengthening the independence of NIH, such as removing it from HEW and making it part of NSF."

As the tens of thousands ponder their questionnaires, they might consider that not only the NSF director, but also his top five subordinates, are presidentially appointed, and that few if any complaints are voiced about politics intruding on NSF's basic research programs.

A clue to the essence of the matter may have been dropped when one reporter who regularly covers NIH told the six that he had never heard a good word for Stone during the Director's 18 months at NIH, and wondered whether his ouster might have something to do with his performance. They said they didn't know.

. . . NIH (Continued): Dismissal Renews Row Over Research

federal government now paying for about one-third of the country's $100-billion-a-year health bill, and the proportion due to rise to nearly all of it when a national health insurance scheme is finally adopted, Edwards took the position that sovereign empires are no longer tolerable in health-related affairs. NIH, in his view, could no longer exist as a self-contained prober of whatever problems happen to interest its employes and grantees; rather, it would have to mesh its interests to an order of priorities that reflected what was ailing the populace–the order of priorities being worked out by Edwards' policy planners and statisticians.

The First Firing

The reasons for Marston's ouster have never been clearly spelled out. On the one hand, he was accused of failing to get on the "team," but on the other, he was privately derided by the Edwards' camp for publicly withholding his doubts about the wisdom of the Conquest of Cancer program that Nixon and his henchmen pushed through Congress in an ignominious race to edge out Kennedy as the nation's anti-cancer champion. It is clear, of course, that any public expression of opposition by Marston would have resulted in his ouster that afternoon, since biomedical politics is a mean game in which damned-if-you-do-and-damned-if-you-don't is a reigning principle.

In any case, the appointment of Stone, who had managed to keep his existence pretty much a secret throughout the biomedical community, was generally interpreted as an effort by Edwards to assert control over NIH by putting it under the direction of a non-entity who would take orders from HEW. This view was reinforced by the subsequent appointment of Theodore Cooper, director of the Heart and Lung Institute, to a newly created position as deputy to Edwards. Cooper, who was well regarded by his NIH colleagues, was considered to be a strong advocate of NIH independence, and, so the analysis went, Edwards preferred to have him on his own staff, rather than leaving him out at NIH where he might possibly convey dangerous thoughts to newly appointed Director Stone. These interpretations were still further reinforced by the revelation that Stone had an unusual bit of background for a medical school administrator: he had once been a visiting professor of management at MIT, which seemed to fit in nicely with Edwards' efforts to get some "management" into the national health enterprise.

"Forward Plan"

It is not known whether Edwards provided Stone with a set of instructions, but if any was required, it could be found in the Forward Plan for Health, which Edwards' office drew up last year to guide HEW's health activities over the five-year period beginning next July 1 (SGR Vol. IV, No. 16).

"While there is no serious challenge to the assertion that a major federal role in the health industry is the support of basic biomedical and behavioral research," the Plan states, "there are growing concerns as to the size and direction of that investment. For example, there are current questions about how priorities are set for biomedical research programs, why the cost of doing research is climbing so rapidly, what the appropriate relation should be between research and health service needs, what the effect of increasing pressure for targeted programs is, and whether there is sufficient 'balance' between and around the various investment targets in the research portfolio." (That stock-market parlance probably caused a run on tranquilizers at NIH.)

Stone's Record

The details of Stone's tenure at NIH are difficult to come by, not because it was relatively brief, but mainly because he seems to have made little impression there–despite some suddenly assembled expressions of grief at his departure. But if gossip may be credited, it appears that the management specialist out of New Mexico medical education came down with a case of pure-science fervor not long after his arrival. The old timers there put him through a crash course on the imperatives of NIH independence, and, being exposed to nothing but that line during most of his working days, he tended to think and talk along those lines whenever he was summoned to deliberations by Edwards and his crew. Edwards was disappointed. And not being content to leave the cause of his disappointment in office when he himself had decided to leave, he cleared the matter with his higher-ups and demanded Stone's resignation. And that's why we now have vacancies in the two top health positions in the US government.–DSG

Book Details Health Spending

With 1975 shaping up as a vintage year for contention over the federal role in health care and research, a useful and compact new publication is hereby recommeded to both spectators and participants who wish to have pertinent statistics close at hand. Titled *Chartbook of Federal Health Spending 1969-1974*, this 64-page booklet was prepared by the Center for Health Policy Studies of the National Planning Association, under a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the new goldmine for health-related studies. Copies, at $2.50 each, are available from the National Planning Association, 1606 New Hampshire Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Kennedy Announces Major Review of Biomedical Programs

Against the background of the firing of NIH Director Robert S. Stone and the resignation of HEW Assistant Secretary for Health Charles C. Edwards, special note should be taken of a recent speech by Senator Edward Kennedy, chairman of the health subcommittee of the Labor and Public Welfare Committee.

Delivered December 2 at the Yale University Medical Center, the speech, titled, "Partners or Protagonists–Congress and the Academic Medical Centers," can be regarded as an introduction to what is shaping up as a lengthy period of turmoil in federal relations with the biomedical community. A good deal of that turmoil will be explored at hearings that Kennedy said he will hold during the year.

Though Kennedy and the Administration, at least as represented by the now-departed Edwards, have their differences on biomedical matters, they generally share common ground in the belief that the major institutions of American medicine and research have been inadequately responsive to the nation's health needs.

"...the winds of change are blowing across the Bethesda campus (of NIH)," Kennedy told his Yale audience, "and the nature of the relationship between you and that great agency is in a state of evolution. This is not surprising nor is it necessarily dangerous to the quality of biomedical research in this country. What was a model relationship in the 1950s and '60s may need changing to respond to the pressures of the '70s."

Noting that NIH is not required to undergo an annual review of its legislative authority (though its budget does receive annual examination in Congress), Kennedy said, "The existence of perpetual legislative authority for most NIH institutes means that those programs are rarely reviewed or revised. This absence of accountability can lead to the development of a dangerously in-bred system and give rise to public suspicion. The appearance of a possible conflict of interest is always a problem for agencies which disburse funds through peer review mechanism....But unless the process is publicly reviewed by the Congress so that problems can be ironed out and alternatives considered–even if only to be rejected–then the peer review system of NIH will continue to be vulnerable to attack."

Charging the biomedical community with "past unwillingness to engage in fundamental examinations and evaluations of some of your most sacred cows–biomedical research programs, research fellowship and training programs and health manpower programs," Kennedy added: "Too often the lobbying effort by the national academic medical centers is indistinguishable from that of any other vested interest group–that is, for the *status quo* and vigorously opposed even to serious discussion of potential reforms."

Kennedy then threw in a few kind words about the importance of basic research and the dangers of supporting cancer research at the cost of research on other diseases. And he defended his support of a temporary ban on fetal research–pending outcome of a study–as having headed off a permanent ban. "We may yet have such a ban," he said, "but if it comes, it will have been arrived at in a far different and far less dangerous manner."

On the subject of medical manpower, which Kennedy's subcommittee dealt with extensively last year, the Senator told his audience, "Here at Yale you specialize in specialists. Can you honestly say you give much thought to whether they are needed? Would it make any difference in what you do or how you do it if they were not needed in the numbers that you and your colleagues across the nation turn them out?....Academic centers have excelled in basic biomedical research. They have not paid as much attention to, or excelled at, health services and health-policy research. If they had, and if the faculty represented a true mixture of these different disciplines, would medical students choose their careers any differently? I think they would. I think we need to develop the same core of excellence in this nation for basic health services and policy research as we have for clinical and biomedical research."

Rise in R&D Forecast for '75

Research and development expenditures in the US this year will probably rise sufficiently to stay a few points ahead of inflation, according to the annual R&D forecast of Battelle's Columbus Laboratories, which has a good record for predicting the numbers.

The total for 1975–from all sources–will amount to $35.6 billion, Battelle forecasts, an increase of $3.5 billion over 1974; in percentage terms, the rise will amount to 11 percent, which noses out the 8.6 percent inflationary increase that Battelle estimates for R&D costs. A great uncertainty, however, is in industrial spending, which accounts for 42 percent of all funds spend in the US on R&D. Industrial funds have been rising, but Battelle cautions that continuation of the trend could be affected by the duration of the recession.

As far as federal government support is concerned, the Battelle forecast is for a "modest increase." It adds that federal funding, which accounts for 52 percent of the national total, "is likely to be for research that will be increasingly directed toward short-term, rather than long-term, goals. The forecast sees an increasing emphasis on 'pragmatism'–with some shift of support from socially related R&D to that directed toward solving immediate resource scarcities." It points out, however, "that as of mid-December neither the Administration nor the Congress has enunciated an R&D policy, and that until that occurs, future trends for Federal R&D funding are difficult to project."

Army Going Ahead with Binary Gas Plans

Now that the United States has finally ratified the 1925 Geneva Protocol outlawing the first use in war of chemical weapons, it's tempting to conclude that both Congress and the Administration are belated converts to the view that chemical warfare is a militarily worthless anachronism that should be abandoned. Unfortunately, that interpretation fails to take into account the proven ability of the Army Chemical Corps to fight for its programs and, incidentally, for its own survival.

Even as the Senate was getting ready to ratify the protocol last month the Chemical Corps was blithely pushing ahead with plans to develop and build a new generation of binary nerve gas weapons—in spite of the fact that Congress had specifically voted last summer to delete production funds for binaries from the Pentagon's budget (SGR Vol. IV, No. 15).

On December 11, the Army announced in the *Commerce Business Daily* that it is looking for a chemical company to make "ton quantities" of two components of binary nerve agents, and it also announced that it wants a manufacturer to produce "artillery projectiles filled with a nontoxic chemical solution."

Those solicitations, which were brought to light by Rep. Les Aspin (D-Wisc.), seem to suggest that the Chemical Corps is either blatantly defying the ban on binary production, or, more likely, that it expects to get funds for the program next year. Asked by SGR to comment on Aspin's charges, Army spokesmen has no immediate response.

In any case, it seems clear that the Army has no intention of caving in to the growing chemical disarmament lobby within the federal government, and that it will fight for the binary program over the next few months.

The binary weapons program is the key not only to the United States' own chemical weapons program, but its fate will also determine the outcome of international chemical disarmament negotiations which will soon resume in Geneva.

The Army has long planned to replace its stockpiles of nerve agents—estimated to amount to about 50 million pounds—with binary weapons. Since the weapons would consist of two relatively non-toxic chemicals which form a nerve agent only when mixed together, the Army has touted the program with the argument that binaries would be safer to store and transport than chemical weapons.

But, when the Pentagon asked Congress last year for $5.8 million to begin producing the new weapons, Congress eventually denied the funds on the basis that a new multibillion dollar chemical warfare program would wreck the Geneva negotiations.

Two points are important, however. First, Congress didn't kill the program entirely; though it refused to provide production funds, it did vote several million dollars for R&D on binaries. And second, the production ban applied only to the 1975 fiscal year. As Rep. Floyd Hicks (D-Wash.), a member of the House Armed Services Committee whose opposition to binaries was deemed crucial last year, put it recently, "The matter of introducing new chemical munitions into our stockpiles has in no way been

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Study Urges Aid to Encourage Minorities in Engineering

For several years now there has been a variety of earnest but loosely coordinated efforts to increase the enrollment of students from ethnic minority groups in engineering courses, but there has been little analysis of the need for such a program and there has been little attempt to establish rigid goals and methods.

Now, however, comes a report optimistically entitled *Minorities in Engineering: A Blueprint for Action,* which seeks to do just that. Put together by a special task force of industrialists, academics, minority leaders and administrators, and funded by the Alfred Sloan Foundation, the report argues that minority students should make up 18 percent of the freshman enrollment in engineering schools by 1982, instead of the present 5 percent.

Such a goal can be achieved, the report estimates, if sufficient financial support is provided to minority students through a single national organization which would both raise and distribute funds. The total cost would be between $151 million and $221 million over the next nine years.

All of which sounds eminently reasonable, but why engineering instead of, say, economics or chemistry? First, the report points out that because of falling enrollments during the past few years, there is plenty of spare capacity in the nation's engineering schools, and employment prospects are bright. Second, engineering degrees provide a passport to relatively highly paid jobs, and finally, "an engineering degree often opens the door to advancement in management, where minorities are also underrepresented."

The minorities to which the report addresses itself are blacks, Mexican-Americans, Chicanos, and American Indians. That other minority in engineering, women, was not dealt with, the report states, because the authors "decided not to try to deal with it," though they said they recognize the problem and support efforts to encourage the solution.

The report is available without charge from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, 630 5th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10020.

AEC in Split on Fast Breeder Safety Device

Still more trouble lies ahead for the AEC's liquid metal fast breeder reactor (LMFBR) program, the most expensive and nominally the highest priority energy R&D effort supported by the federal government.

With cost estimates for the first LMFBR demonstration plant escalating from $700 million to $1.7 billion even before construction has begun–and murmurings of discontent rising above the whisper point in The Office of Management and Budget (OMB), now comes evidence of a sharp disagreement within AEC itself over what safety features should be built into the reactors.

According to a staff study prepared by the General Accounting Office (GAO) last month, the nub of the dispute is whether or not the demonstration plant, which is due to be built on the Clinch River in Tennessee, should be fitted with an expensive safety device to "accommodate the consequences" of a devasting accident to the central reactor core.

In short, the AEC's regulatory branch reckons that a "core catcher" should be fitted to the plant to receive radioactive debris from the reactor core in the unlikely event of a core failure..The idea would be to spread out the debris to stop it forming into a mass capable of a chain reaction, and to stop it melting through the reactor base.

But the AEC's reactor development branch and the industrial consortium hoping to build the Clinch River plant believe that such an accident is so unlikely that it is "incredible"; therefore no such safety features are needed.

The remoteness of the danger is only part of the argument, though. The GAO report notes that "Of significant concern to project participants is the possibility that including the unproven and expensive core catcher–estimated to cost between $20 and $60 million–in the (Clinch River demonstration plant) will lead to a requirement for such devices in future commercial plants. Some project participants are concerned that including core catchers would make LMFBRs less commercially attractive to the utilities." In other words, the already shaky economics of the breeder could be thrown even further out of kilter if the electric utilities are forced to put safety before economics.

On another point, the GAO study charges that the participants in the Clinch River project have been inordinately slow in transmitting design data to the AEC's regulatory branch, so that at the beginning of December the regulators were still awaiting critical data needed for a safety review. AEC officials had, in fact, complained in a series of letters earlier this year about the delays, and the GAO notes that the upshot could be "overall scheduled stretchout and increased costs" of the demonstration plant.

Meanwhile, the AEC's final environmental impact statement on the breeder program, which was due to be published last June, has yet to see the light of day, and it may not even be ready before the AEC is abolished early this year.

The GAO study is the first to emerge from a massive investigation of the LMFBR program which is being undertaken at the request of Rep. Les Aspin (D-Wisc.), a prominent critic of the program.

White House Appoints Academic Liaison

The White House has appointed Robert A. Goldwin, a political scientist on leave from St. John's College, Annapolis, Md., to provide liaison with the academic community. Goldwin, who will hold the title of special consultant to the President, formerly was special assistant to Donald Rumsfeld, Ford's chief assistant, when Rumsfeld was ambassador to NATO.

Chemical Warfare *(Continued from page 5)*

put to rest...the defense budget submitted this January will no doubt have another Pentagon request to begin production of binary munitions."

The outcome of the debate on binaries will be crucial to the outcome of the Geneva negotiations since it would be impossible for US negotiators to argue credibly for chemical disarmament while the Pentagon is pushing ahead with a major new program. Nevertheless, at least the ratification last month of the Geneva Protocol should enhance US credibility a little.

The ratification came on the eve of the Congressional recess, thanks to last-minute efforts by Senator J. W. Fulbright to break a deadlock between Congress and the Administration over how the protocol should be interpreted. The impasse arose in 1971 when President Nixon resubmitted the protocol to the Senate for ratification with the express understanding that it does not cover the use in war of riot control agents or herbicides.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee refused to accept that interpretation–in fact, the UN General Assembly had previously voted overwhelmingly that the protocol includes riot control agents and herbicides–and Fulbright asked Nixon to reconsider his position.

After three years of reconsideration in the Executive branch, Fred Ikle, Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, announced on December 10 that the Administration had now come round to the view that the protocol precludes first use in war of all chemical agents, including herbicides and riot control agents. Ikle did, however, indicate that an exception could be made for such used of riot control agents as to control the rioting of prisoners of war, or "in situations where civilian casualties can be reduced or avoided. This use would be restricted to situations in which civilians are used to mask or screen attacks."

After the Administration's retreat from its former viewpoint, the protocol was ratified without opposition.

Mining Company Stakes Claim on Pacific Floor

An American mining company has publicly staked a "claim" on all the manganese nodules in a 60,000 square kilometer area of the Pacific, and has asked for "diplomatic protection" by the US government when it begins scooping up the nodules later this year.

The company, Deepsea Ventures Inc, which is a subsidiary of Tenneco, filed the claim in a letter to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, in which it asserted "the exclusive rights to develop the (mineral deposits) and to take, use and sell all of the manganese nodules in, and the minerals and metals derived therefrom."

Since the question of who owns mineral deposits on the deep seabed is a central issue in the Law of the Sea Conference, due to reconvene this spring, if the State Department had agreed to Deepsea's request for diplomatic backing of its preemptive claim, the US negotiating position would have been seriously undermined and the talks would probably have been wrecked even before they began.

Consequently, Deepsea's letter drew the following response: "The Department of State does not grant or recognize exclusive mining claims on the seabeds beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. International law does not, in our view, prohibit deep seabed mining, and those interested are free to do so." In other words, Deepsea Ventures can go ahead with its plans, but it won't get protection for its claim from the State Department.

Nevertheless, the claim shouldn't simply be written off as an unsuccessful attempt to force the US government to take unilateral action, since the very fact that it has been filed will become a powerful lever later this year in the mining industry's bid to persuade Congress to act in its behalf.

For several years, the American Mining Congress (AMC) has been lobbying hard to get Congress to pass a bill which would protect American investment in deep seabed mining technology. The AMC has been vigorously supporting a measure–which it in fact wrote and persuaded Senator Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.) to introduce–which would establish a exclusive licensing scheme and provide insurance against damages caused by "any other person against whom a legal remedy does not exist."

The bill was approved in August last year by the Senate Interior Committee, but the Foreign Relations Committee immediately claimed jurisdiction and kept the measure bottled up until Congress adjourned.

The bill is certain to reappear this year, however, and House Oceanography subcommittee chairman Rep. Thomas N. Downing (D-Va.)–in whose district Deapsea Ventures operates–has already drawn attention to Deepsea's claim and the need for some protective legislation. "In view of this discovery and claim," Downing said last month, "I feel that it is imperative that the Congress meet its responsibility to assure orderly development in a field of such potential importance to our nation's welfare and industrial capacity. I urge that the House soon complete its consideration of the legislation which would provide this guidance and act favorably on it."

Downing and Metcalf are therefore likely to resurrect the bill this year and give it some publicity just as the Law of the Sea Conference gets under way in Geneva, thereby sending a message that Congress is likely to act unilaterally if the conference deadlocks again.

Oak Ridge Laboratory Renamed for Chet Holifield

In the tradition of naming public buildings after prominent benefactors, the AEC's Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee will henceforth be known as the Holifield National Laboratory in honor of Chet Holifield, the California Democrat who is leaving Congress this year after a 32-year stint. A charter member of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy and its chairman for six years, Holifield has been a persistent and effective supporter of atomic energy. A bill renaming the Oak Ridge National Laboratory was guided through Congress just before the adjournment, under the sponsorship of Holifield's colleagues on the JCAE.

EPA Appoints R&D Chief

The Environmental Protection Agency finally has selected an assistant administrator for R&D, filling a post that has been vacant since last May. The candidate, who will require Senate confirmation, is Wilson K. Talley, a nuclear engineer and assistant vice president at the University of California, Davis. Talley, it should be noted, is a study director for Rockefeller's Commission on Critical Choices.

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Electric Utility Ads Match Spending on R&D

As any advertising reader knows, the electricity industry is spending heavily on research and development in a public-spirited drive to help solve the energy crisis. But, according to figures recently compiled by the Federal Power Commission, those ads and other sales expenses cost as much as the R&D.

In 1973–the latest year for which such information is available–privately owned electric utilities spent a total of $214.7 million on advertising and sales, and $239.2 million on R&D, which dismal as it may be, is at least an improvement on previous years. In 1971, for example, spending on advertising and sales outstripped spending on R&D by 3.3 to 1, and in 1969, the ratio was 7 to 1.

Those figures, reprinted in the *Congressional Record* by Senator Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.), may, however, be misleading, for as Metcalf points out: It is important to keep in mind . . . that through accounting procedures, research and development figures can be padded, while advertising expenses can be made to appear smaller than they really are."

Nevertheless, there are signs that the utilities are belatedly stepping up their spending on R&D, particularly through the establishment of cooperative organizations such as the Electric Power Research Institute and nuclear power groups.

A notable exception to that trend, however, is the American Electric Power system–the outfit which has recently been advertising heavily in large daily newspapers and weekly magazines with a pitch for more strip mining for coal and less emphasis on energy conservation.

The AEP is a holding company for seven utilities, six of which spent less on R&D in 1973 than they did in 1970. Furthermore, the AEP's companies spent on average 6.8 times as much on advertising and sales as they did on R&D in 1973 and the situation for 1974 is likely to be even worse, since the company's latest advertising campaign is reckoned to cost more than $3 million.

Congress Ignores Call for Budget Cuts

The 93rd Congress dragged to a close last month without taking any specific action on President Ford's proposal to slash $4.6 billion from this year's federal spending (SGR Vol. IV, No. 22), but it seems clear that the next Congress will throw out many of Ford's suggestions, and most of the science programs which have been slated for surgery will probably escape the knife.

For a start, Ford had recommended that $112 million be taken from the Administration's budget request for biomedical research at NIH, but he eventually signed an HEW appropriations bill which boosts NIH's budget by $256 million, instead of reducing it. Although Ford indicated when he signed the bill that he will later propose holding over some of HEW's budget until next year, Congress is unlikely to go along with any suggestion to cut back on biomedical research.

As for Ford's proposal to defer spending until next year of some $80 million in funds already appropriated for the Atomic Energy Commission, Senator John O. Pastore (D-R.I.) who resumes the chairmanship of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy this month, has introduced a resolution into the Senate compelling the Administration to spend the money this year. That resolution is sure to be taken up by the 94th Congress.

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